

# **Transformed, not Conformed:**

**The difference between Christian and Secular  
worldviews**

**New Life**  
**Sep 13, 2015**



**Romans 12 <sup>2</sup>** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.



# Goals

- 1. How can the concept of worldviews help us as we interact with unbelievers?**
- 2. Does our own worldview consistent with Scripture? Or with the culture?**





# **“Religion” vs. “Worldview”**



**What is your worldview?**

**Your answers to life's big questions that  
guide your daily actions and values**





## **Big questions:**

- 1. How do we know whether something is true?**
- 2. What's the basis for right vs. wrong?  
Valuable vs. not valuable?**
- 3. What's wrong with humanity?**
- 4. How do we fix it?**
- 5. What constitutes "the good life"?**
- 6. Where did we come from? What's our purpose?**
- 7. What happens after we die?**
- 8. How should I treat those who disagree with me?**

**How should Christians answer these questions?**



# **The dominant secular worldview**

(common in media, government, academia, urban centers)

1. Scientism
2. Individual autonomy
3. Religious belief as therapeutic



# 1. Scientism

Scientism says:

- Scientific testing is the only path to reliable, objective knowledge
- Science only deals with the natural world (no supernatural)
- Thus, natural world is all that you can know anything about.





# Weakness

The problem with Scientism:

“Only beliefs that can be proven through scientific experiments are trustworthy.”

“Can you prove that statement through scientific experiments?”





## 2. Individual Autonomy

Since objective values, morality, purpose cannot be demonstrated from science...

**Each individual has the right to define their own identity, sense of meaning, and sense of the “good life”**

No higher purpose. We make our own purpose.

“At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life”

– Anthony Kennedy, *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*



## 2. Individual Autonomy

Since objective values, morality, purpose cannot be demonstrated from science...

**Each individual has the right to define their own identity, sense of meaning, and sense of the “good life”**

No higher purpose. We make our own purpose.

(Don't tell others that they should conform to your sense of right and wrong!)

Weakness?



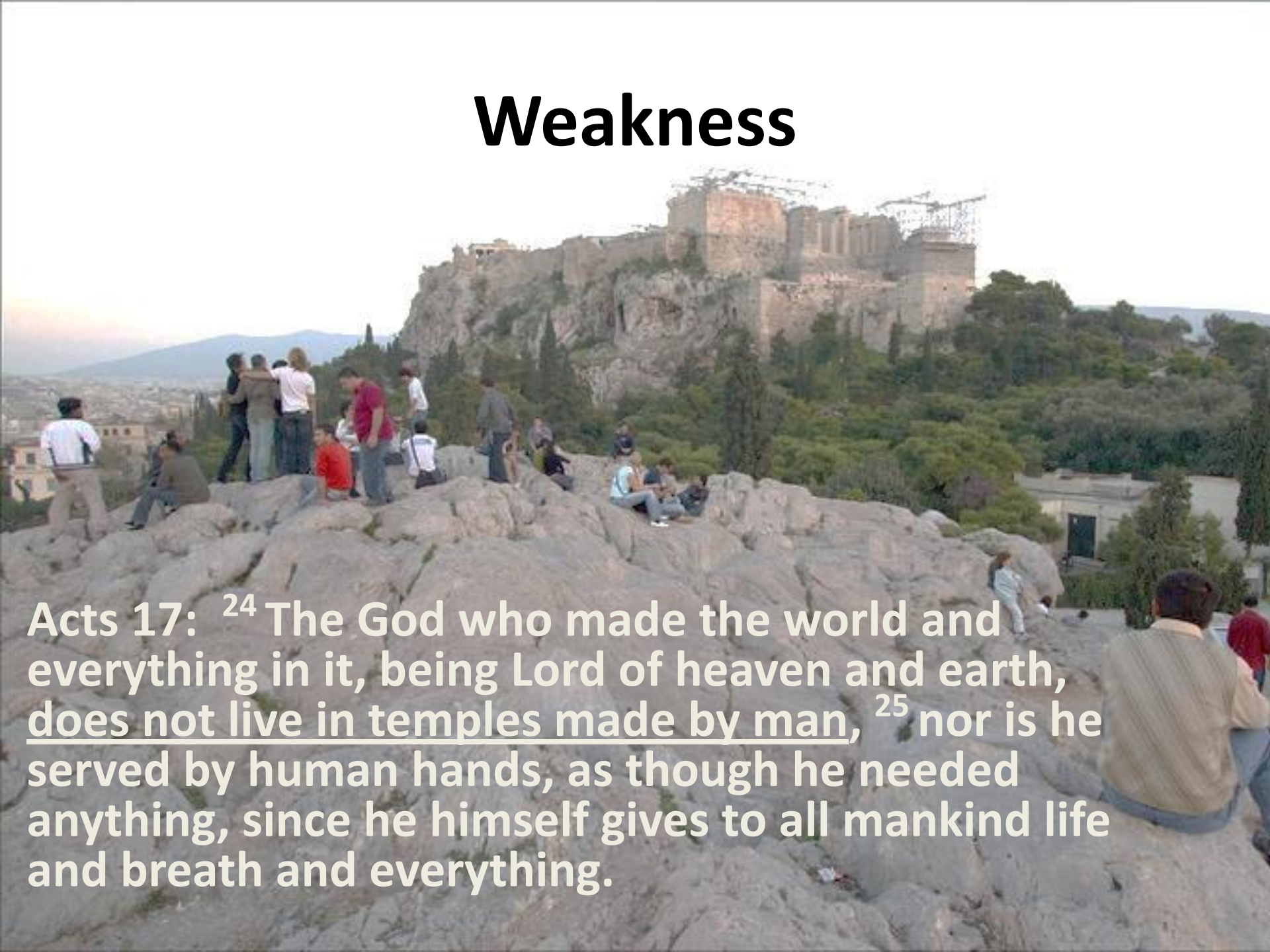
### 3. Religious belief as Therapeutic

- Religions are man-made efforts to create meaning
- Believe whatever is helpful and meaningful to you
- Objective religious claims are oppressive





# Weakness



Acts 17: <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, <sup>25</sup> nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.



**Don't focus on “symptom” issues.**

**Focus on “worldview” issues**



# What worldview commitments are behind these statements?

1. “I don’t see how Jesus is relevant to me.”

“Hidden beneath this feeling is the very modern American belief that the existence of God is a matter of indifference unless it intersects with my emotional needs.”

– Tim Keller, *The Reason for God*



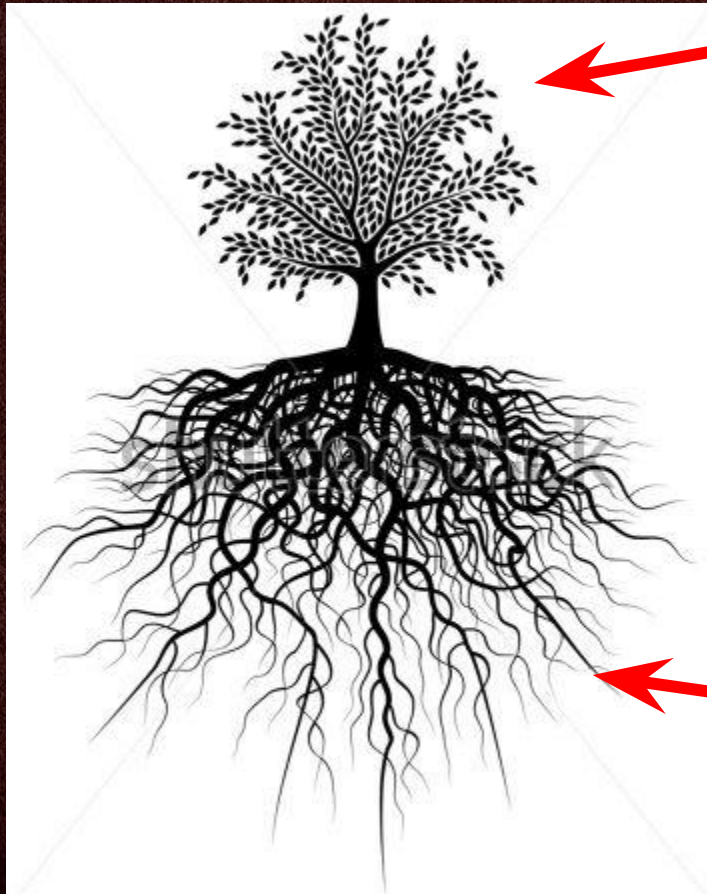
# What worldview commitments are behind these statements?

1. “I don’t see how Jesus is relevant to me.”
2. “Christianity seems so unscientific and old fashioned.”
3. “Yeah I believe in Jesus, but I don’t go overboard with it. I’m not an extremist.”
4. “All religions are basically the same.”
5. “Religious belief is too culturally & historically conditioned to be truth.”
6. “If it’s not hurting anyone, I should be able to do whatever I want with my body.”
7. vii. “I am not religious but I am very spiritual.”

(group discussion)



# Don't argue about branches, ask them what the root of their belief is



Arguments on Facebook

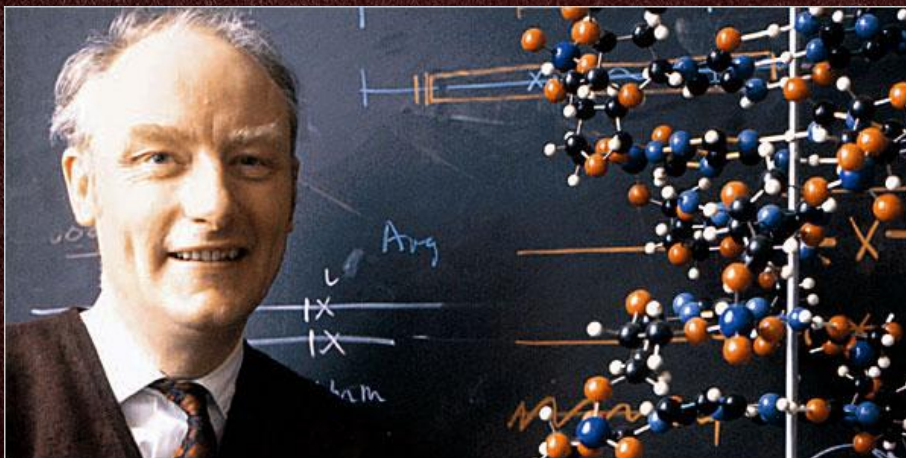
Example:  
Tim Keller and the  
doctrine of Hell

Worldview issues



# Key weaknesses for secular worldview:

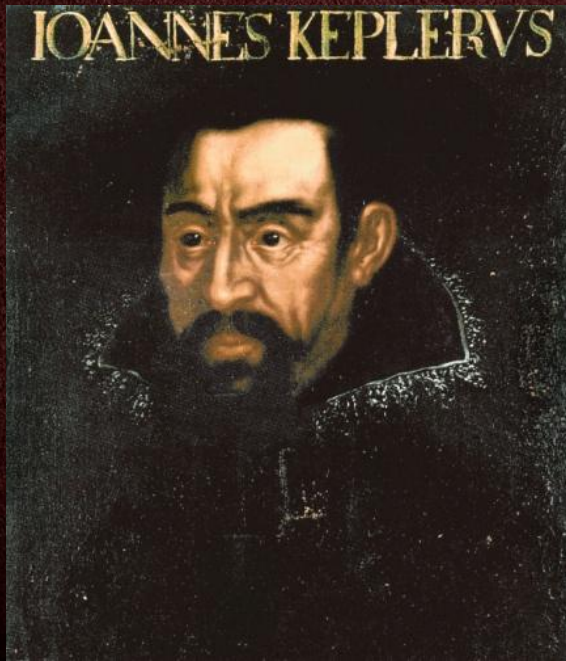
- Scientism is self-defeating
- Where do human “rights” come from?
- Religious truth claims are objective
- **Science and the reliability of your mind**





“Those [scientific] laws are within the grasp of the human mind. God wanted us to recognize them by creating us after his own image so that we could share in his own thoughts.”

- **Johannes Kepler**, 1571 - 1630





**What about us?**

**Where do we find ourselves  
soaking up an American  
cultural worldview?**



(group discussion)



# Brainstorm

- Desire for human approval – “I want people to think I’m smart.” Academic accomplishment and pedigree as ultimate
- “What job will be fulfilling to me?”
- Superstitious, karmic views – If I’m good, good things will happen to me
- Preoccupation with fame and attention
- Narcissism – I am the star of my own movie.
- Entertainment, input just bounce off of me, don’t harm me.
- Greed – low view of community needs. Competitive in regard to wealth / success / beauty
- Individual-centric hopes and dreams – the emphasis is on defining your ideal path that maximizes meaning for you.



# Questions?

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